

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

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Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for communication employing a plurality of gatekeepers, the method comprising the steps of:
receiving a request for information at a first gatekeeper;
determining whether the information is known by the first gatekeeper;
sending the request via at least one intermediate gatekeeper to a second gatekeeper if the information is not known by the first gatekeeper; [and]
receiving the requested information from the second gatekeeper via the at least one intermediate gatekeeper wherein a hierarchical level associated with said first gatekeeper is different from a hierarchical level associated with said intermediate gatekeeper; and
sending the requested information to a third gatekeeper wherein the first gatekeeper and the third gatekeeper are of a same hierarchical level and located in a same domain.

Claim 2 (previously amended): The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
storing the received information in at least one of the first, intermediate and second gatekeepers.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 wherein said sending the request includes the steps of:
[(i)] determining [the] a next gatekeeper in [the] a gatekeeper-level path to the requested information.

Claim 4 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the information includes an application address.

Claim 5 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the information includes resource information.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of:
[(f)] sending the received information to a requesting entity.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of:
[(f)] attempting to connect to a called entity using information contained in the information.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of:
[(e)] determining whether a hop-count field has been set to zero; and

[(f)] if the hop-count field has been set to zero, dropping the received information.

Claim 9 (original): The method of claim 3, where the first gatekeeper is an inter-zone gatekeeper.

Claim 10 (original): The method of claim 3, where the first gatekeeper is an inter-domain gatekeeper.

Claim 11 (currently amended): An apparatus for communication, the apparatus comprising:
a processor; and
a memory coupled to said processor, said memory storing instructions adapted to be executed by said processor for performing the steps of:
receiving a request for information at a first gatekeeper;
determining whether the information is known by the first gatekeeper;
sending the request via an intermediate gatekeeper to a second gatekeeper if the information is not known by the first gatekeeper; [and]
receiving the requested information from the second gatekeeper via the intermediate gatekeeper wherein a hierarchical level associated with said first gatekeeper is different from a hierarchical level associated with said intermediate gatekeeper; and
sending the requested information to a third gatekeeper wherein the first gatekeeper and the third gatekeeper are of a same hierarchical level and located in a same domain.

Claim 12 (previously amended): The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the instructions further perform the step of:
storing the received information in at least one of the gatekeepers.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 11, wherein sending the request includes the step of determining [the] a next gatekeeper in the gatekeeper-level path to the requested information.

Claim 14 (original): The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the information includes an application address.

Claim 15 (original): The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the information includes resource information.

Claim 16 (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 12, said memory storing further instructions adapted to be run on said processor, said further instructions comprising:

[(vi)] sending the received information to a requesting entity.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 12, said memory storing further instructions adapted to be run on said processor, said further instructions comprising:

[(vi)] attempting to connect to a called entity using information contained in the information.

Claim 18 (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 13, said memory storing further instructions adapted to be run on said processor, said further instructions comprising:

[(v)] determining whether a hop-count field has been set to zero; and

[(vi)] if the hop-count field has been set to zero, dropping the received information.

Claim 19 (original): The apparatus of claim 13, where the first gatekeeper is an inter-zone gatekeeper.

Claim 20 (original): The apparatus of claim 13, where the first gatekeeper is an inter-domain gatekeeper.

Claim 21 (currently amended): A medium for communications, the communication using a plurality of gatekeepers at different hierarchical levels, said medium storing instructions adapted to be executed by a processor for performing the steps of:

receiving a request for information at a first gatekeeper;

determining whether the information is known by the first gatekeeper;

sending the request via an intermediate gatekeeper to a second gatekeeper if the information is not known by the first gatekeeper; [and]

receiving the requested information from the second gatekeeper via the intermediate gatekeeper wherein the first gatekeeper and the intermediate gatekeeper are at different hierarchical levels; and

sending the requested information to a third gatekeeper wherein the first gatekeeper and the third gatekeeper are of a same hierarchical level and located in a same domain.

Claim 22 (previously amended): The medium of claim 21, wherein the instructions further perform the step of:

storing the received information in one of the gatekeepers.

Claim 23 (currently amended): The medium of claim 21, wherein said sending the request includes the steps of:

[(i)] determining [the] a next gatekeeper in the gatekeeper-level path to the requested information.

Claim 24 (original): The medium of claim 21, wherein the information includes an application address.

Claim 25 (original): The medium of claim 21, wherein the information includes resource information.

Claim 26 (currently amended): The medium of claim of claim 22, storing further information adapted to be executed by a processor, the further information comprising:
[(f)] sending the received information to a requesting entity.

Claim 27 (currently amended): The medium of claim 22, storing further information adapted to be executed by a processor, the further information comprising:
[(f)] attempting to connect to a called entity using information contained in the information.

Claim 28 (currently amended): The medium of claim 23, storing further information adapted to be executed by a processor, the further information comprising:
[(e)] determining whether a hop-count field has been set to zero; and
[(f)] if the hop-count field has been set to zero, dropping the received information.

Claim 29 (original): The medium of claim 23, where the first gatekeeper is an inter-zone gatekeeper.

Claim 30 (original): The medium of claim 23, where the first gatekeeper is an inter-domain gatekeeper.